

Body mass index (BMI) of adults : findings of the Malaysian Adult Nutrition Survey (MANS).

ABSTRACT

The Malaysian Adults Nutrition Survey (MANS) was carried out between October 2002 and July 2003, involving 6,775 men and 3,441 women aged 18 - 59 years. Anthropometric assessment showed that the overall mean body weight and BMI were 62.65 kg (CI: 62.20, 63.09) and 24.37 kg/m² (CI: 24.21, 24.53) respectively. Based on the WHO (1998) classification of BMI, 12.15% (CI: 11.26, 13.10) were obese (BMI > 30 kg/m²), and 26.71% (CI: 25.50, 27.96) overweight (BMI > 25-29.9 kg/m²). Significantly, more women were obese [14.66% (CI: 13.37, 16.04)] while significantly more men were overweight [28.55% (CI: 26.77, 30.40)]. Ethnicitywise, prevalence of obesity was highest among the Malays [15.28% (CI: 13.91, 16.77)] while overweight was highest for the Indians [31.01% (CI: 26.64, 35.76)]. Both obesity and overweight were highest among those aged 40-49 years. Obesity was highest for those whose household income was between RM1,500-3,500 while overweight was more prevalent for those whose household income exceeded RM3,500. The prevalence of overweight was highest for those with primary education [31.90% (CI: 29.21, 34.72)]. There was no significant urban-rural differential in both obesity and overweight. The study found 9.02% (CI: 8.82, 10.61) with chronic energy deficiency (CED) (BMI < 18.5 kg/m²). The prevalence of CED was relatively higher in the indigenous population (Orang Asli) [14.53% (CI: 5.14, 34.77)], subjects aged 18-19 years [26.24% (CI: 21.12, 32.09)], and with monthly household income of < RM1,500 [10.85% (CI: 9.63, 12.20)]. The prevalence of CED was not significantly different among the geographical zones and educational levels, and between urban/rural areas and sexes. The results call for priority action to address the serious problem of overweight and obesity among Malaysian adults as it poses a grave burden to the country's resources and development.

Keyword: Adults; BMI; Findings from MANS